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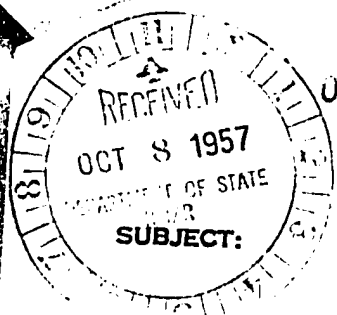
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OCT 8 1957 Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: October 5, 1957



Central Europe and German Reunification

PARTICIPANTS: Secretary Dulles
Mr. Elbrick
Mr. Edward L. Freers
Foreign Minister Gromyko
Ambassador Zaroubin
Mr. Oleg Troyanovsky

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SECRETARY DULLES: The situation in Central Europe is very dangerous and explosive. We realize the Soviet Union feels that this should not concern us--only the Soviet Union. The fact is, if there should be a series of explosive situations, it would not be easy to assure that the situation would not involve us. We believe the Soviet Union ought to have friendly nations and friendly governments along its borders. We have no intention of trying to develop a cordon sanitaire around it. The Soviet Union is entitled to a sense of security. If a relationship could be developed with other bordering countries similar to that between Finland and the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, with a sense of independence and yet close relations, this would be a very acceptable solution. What we are afraid of is the question that arises from national aspirations, very old and persistent, that survive in the Eastern European countries even after many occupations. We do not believe it possible, without great danger at least, to deny them a greater measure of national independence nor to deny the urge for unity felt by such a great people as the Germans. We are willing to consider any formula regarding Germany which would eliminate danger to the Soviet Union and bring about reunification. In pursuing the latter we don't want to jeopardize the security of the Soviet Union nor increase the power of NATO. We do fear the danger in the situation existing in Germany and the satellite countries. The longer the present situation prevails the greater the danger--and any hope of the Russian people that their security/not be endangered diminishes as well. We are anxious to find a basis for cooperation to eliminate the dangerous situation and do not seek gain for ourselves. A solution would afford much greater security. . . .

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MR. GROMYKO:

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MR. GROMYKO: Before referring to the topics raised by Secretary Dulles, Mr. Gromyko asked for a translation of the Secretary's remarks concerning Central Europe and Algeria. Then he asked whether the Secretary in speaking of Germany referred not only to Germany but also Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

THE SECRETARY said yes and repeated that if these countries achieved a relationship with the Soviet Union like that of Finland and Yugoslavia this should be entirely satisfactory both for the Soviet Union and ourselves. . . .

FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO: . . . Regarding Central Europe and Germany, I asked Mr. Dulles previously what he meant by Central Europe. His explanation showed that he referred not only to Germany but to some other countries. I must say at the outset that the question of Central Europe--and not only Central Europe but Eastern Europe as well (it doesn't matter where these countries are put)--cannot be the subject of any discussion between the Soviet Union and the United States. The same position holds for Germany. When the Government of the United States tried to make this area the subject of discussion at Geneva, the Soviet Government pointed out that it cannot have the countries there be the subject of discussion--Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia or any other People's Democracy. It is a matter of their internal affairs.

Just as the United States or the Soviet Union or any other country should decide for itself, the people of these countries should decide their own internal affairs, including the type of government they want. There can be no question of setting up a government which might be 50% satisfactory to the US and 50% satisfactory to the Soviet Union--only 100% in accord with the wishes of the people of these countries.

No country has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of those countries. I can only express surprise that Mr. Dulles raised the matter and at the hint that a situation might arise in which the US would not be able to remain aloof. The internal affairs and the foreign relations of the countries concerned can only be determined by them. They have chosen their own way of development whether this is liked by the US or any other country. There is no question of any recipes or suggestions from the outside as to how these countries can act. Mr. Dulles referred to Finland and Yugoslavia and put forth the idea that some of these countries should follow the same pattern. There is no need of recipes from the outside. Only these countries themselves can decide what they want. For that reason, the Soviet Government rejects any attempts at interference in the internal affairs of these countries.

As for situations which may arise in the area, these might arise in different ways. If they concern internal affairs, the people should decide the matter themselves. If peace is involved and the situation arises as a result of activity by a third party from the outside, I emphasize that the Soviet Union is bound to these countries through its commitments in the Warsaw Treaty and would certainly fulfill those commitments. It is guided by its interests in the development of national independence and peaceful coexistence--regardless of social systems.

Some similar thoughts to those regarding Eastern Europe were expressed by Mr. Dulles regarding the German problem. As far as the Soviet Union is

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concerned, its position is absolutely clear, and I can add little to what has already been stated by our government on that score. I repeat that we consider that now when two sovereign states are in existence there, the problem can be settled only through gradual rapprochement between these two parties. No other parties can help. Unfortunately, the Adenauer Government, the US Government and others are acting in the opposite direction. This only increases the problems between the two German states. Instead of facilitating their rapprochement, new difficulties are created. The Soviet Union will go to no conference at which the German problem is raised. The only way for settlement is by the Germans themselves.

Mr. Dulles mentioned the fact that the US Government understands the apprehensions the Soviet Union may have regarding the German problem from the viewpoint of its own security. Mr. Dulles also stressed the idea that the US did not seek a German settlement which would increase danger to Soviet security or enhance the power of NATO. This is not borne out by the facts. The latest Western proposals would naturally lead to that result. Mention is made to guarantees to be offered to the Soviet Union. Who would provide them? -- the military bloc of NATO? We believe that in accordance with the objective situation NATO is the spearhead against the security of the USSR.

As to the possible situations which may arise regarding the position of Germany as hinted by Mr. Dulles in connection with the German Democratic Republic, these could also arise in different ways. If the situation involved the German Democratic Republic, including its relations with other states, it would be a matter for the GDR to deal with as a sovereign state. A different situation might arise if there were interference by third parties. This would be a threat to peace and security in Europe and I must say that the Soviet Union is bound by its Warsaw Pact obligations and would fulfill them with regard to the GDR as well as other countries mentioned. It stands to reason that the Soviet Government hopes that the situation in Europe will develop no serious complications giving rise to a threat to peace. If our two countries work together and facilitate cooperation between the two states for a settlement of the problem, this will be welcomed by the Soviet Union.

I would like to add with regard to Germany, that in our view, the latest proposal of the GDR for a confederation of the two German states could provide an appropriate basis for gradual rapprochement and settlement between the two Germans. Adenauer and others are pretending not to notice the GDR. In so doing, they are deepening the chasm between the two. . . .

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